

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, July 30, 1999

The House met at 9 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We recognize, O God, that as we focus on our communities and our world there are voices of anger and acts of violence. Yet, we know too that there are voices of singing and acts of kindness and love. We know there is pain and we know there is joy, there is enmity and there is reconciliation.

Teach us, gracious God, so to number our days that our mouths will speak of wisdom and faith and our deeds will be of justice and righteousness.

Bless all Your people, O God, this day and every day, we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAHOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 819, an act to authorize appropriations for the Federal Maritime Commission for fiscal years 2000 and 2001.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain 1-minute requests at the end of today's business.

RECESS

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for 5 minutes.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess for 5 minutes.

□ 0910

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD) at 9 o'clock and 10 minutes a.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 1501, JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM ACT OF 1999

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1501) to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide grants to ensure increased accountability for juvenile offenders; to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to provide quality prevention programs and accountability programs relating to juvenile delinquency, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Conyers moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 1501, be instructed to insist that—

(1) the committee of conference recommend a conference substitute which—

(A) includes a requirement that background checks be conducted on all firearms sales at gun shows so as to effectively preclude criminals and other prohibited purchasers (e.g. murderers, rapists, child molesters, fugitives from justice, illegal aliens, stalkers, and batterers) from obtaining firearms from non-licensed persons and federally licensed firearms dealers at gun shows;

(B) does not include any measure that would weaken the effectiveness of background checks currently conducted on individuals seeking to purchase a firearm from a federally licensed firearms dealer;

(C) does not include any measure that would otherwise weaken or eliminate any other provision of Federal firearms law or regulation; and

(D) includes provisions which would authorize funding for school resource officers and school violence prevention programs, including school counselors;

(2) all meetings of the committee of conference—

(A) be open to the public and to the print and electronic media;

(B) be held in venues selected to maximize the capacity for attendance of the public and the media; and

(C) be held during reasonable hours;

(3) the committee of conference allow sufficient opportunity for all members of the committee of conference to offer and debate amendments at all meetings of the committee of conference; and

(4) the committee of conference recommend a conference substitute before Congress adjourns for the August recess so that Congress can pass reasonable gun safety measures before children return to school.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) will be recognized for 30 minutes, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONYERS. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that I have no objection to the instructions proposed by the gentleman from Michigan and we will accept them.

I just have one caveat, and that is putting time constraints on this may make it more difficult to resolve. We will do our best. It would be in an ideal world that we could finish this next week.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I say to the chairman, it is not binding, that we are going to do our best to accomplish that.

Mr. Speaker, as disappointed as I have been about the senseless delays that have prevented this Congress from sending to the President's desk reasonable and moderate gun safety measures, I am pleased that we are finally ready to appoint conferees.

□ 0915

On August 16, in just a few weeks, the children who attended Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, will be returning to school. It has been over 3 months since the tragedy in Columbine occurred. But because of the delaying tactics by the National Rifle Association and its allies, we have only 1 week to settle the gun safety issues before we adjourn for the summer recess.

We should not delay longer. How can we do nothing when 13 children are killed as a result of gun violence in this Nation every single day?

Nine people were shot to death in Atlanta, Georgia, yesterday, and 12 were wounded. We do not know all the facts, but this was clearly a disturbed man who should not own a gun. We need a